

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LUBUMB 00255 080929Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----081009Z 083728 /12
P 051630Z MAY 77
FM AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2047

S E C R E T LUBUMBASHI 0255

EXDIS

FOLWG MSG SENT ACTION KINSHASA RPTD FOR YOUR INFO

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SHUM, CG, MO
SUBJ: POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS FROM BADER VISIT TO KOLWEZI

REF: LUBUMBASHI 252

1. WHILE IN KOLWEZI, VICE CONSUL MET CHIEF OF MOROCCAN MILITARY MEDICAL TEAM, WHO UNSOLICITEDLY OFFERED TO ARRANGE MEETING WITH COMMANDER OF MOROCCAN FORCES, COLONEL LOUBARIS. VICE CONSUL ACCEPTED, AND THEY MET EVENING MAY 3 OVER BEERS IN BAR AT IMPALA MOTEL. COLONEL LOUBARIS WASTED NO TIME IN LAUNCHING INTO STRONG, THOUGH FRIENDLY, ATTACK ON PRESENT US POLICY IN ZAIRE. HE SAID ZAIRE IS LONG-TIME FRIEND OF US, NOW BEING ABANDONED IN MOMENT OF NEED. THIS MAKING VERY NEGATIVE IMPRESSION ON FRIENDS AND ALLIES OF US, HE CLAIMED. ZAIRE FACED WITH SOVIET-INSPIRED ATTACK WHICH HE SAID PART OF OVERALL COMMUNIST STRATEGY TO TAKE OVER SOUTHERN AFRICA. IF MOBUTU FALLS, HE SAID, US HAS NO HOPE OF MAINTAINING ZAIRE AS FRIEND. COLONEL SAID HE RECOGNIZED CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED ON US POLICY BY DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, CRITICAL PRESS, AND POST-VIETNAM CLIMATE OF OPINION, BUT ADDED HE FELT COVERT
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PAGE 02 LUBUMB 00255 080929Z

US ACTION ON BEHALF OF MOBUTU WOULD BE APPROPRIATE IN CURRENT SITUATION. VICE CONSUL RESPONDED TO EFFECT US NOT ABANDONING ZAIRE, THAT \$15 MILLION SHIPMENTS REPRESENTED COMMITMENT TO COUNTRY'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, AND THAT MORE DIRECT INTERVENTION NOT LIKELY IN LIGHT OF STATED ADMINISTRATION POLICY AND GENERAL SENTIMENT IN CONGRESS. COLONEL OBVIOUSLY

NOT SATISFIED WITH RESPONSE, AND ADDED THAT AT LEAST FRANCE IS STANDING UP FOR FREE WORLD IN ZAIRE.

2. THIS DISCOURSE ESSENTIALLY A LEAD-UP TO PITCH FOR SPECIFIC HELP. NOTING THAT USG HAS SUPPLIED MILITARY TRUCKS TO ZAIRE, COLONEL WONDERED ALOUD WHY IT COULDN'T ALSO PROVIDE AMBULANCES AND HELICOPTERS FOR PURPOSE OF EVACUATION OF WOUNDED. COLONEL SAID CURRENT EVACUATION CAPABILITIES BARELY SUFFICIENT FOR MOROCCAN CASUALTIES IN LIGHT SKIRMISH, AND TOTALLY INADEQUATE IN CASE OF CASUALTIES EXPECTED IN MAJOR BATTLE. WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS TROOPS' LIVES, COLONEL NOT WILLING TO PERMIT RAPID MOROCCAN ADVANCE TOWARD DILOLO. WITH RESULTING CASUALTY INCREASE, UNLESS HE ASSURED ADEQUATE EVACUATION MEANS. HE CLAIMED HIS TROOPS COULD BE IN DILOLO "TOMORROW" IF HELICOPTERS AND AMBULANCES AVAILABLE. WHEN VICE CONSUL ASKED IF THIS WAS IN NATURE OF REQUEST TO BE RELAYED TO USG, COLONEL BACKED OFF AND SAID HE WAS A SOLDIER, AND THAT SUCH FORMAL REQUESTS SHOULD PROPERLY BE CONVEYED THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY CHANNELS. NEVERTHELESS, COLONEL CONTINUED TO HARP ON NEED FOR HELICOPTERS AND AMBULANCES, AND ON DRIVE BACK TO HOSPITAL MOROCCAN DOCTOR REPEATED SAME PITCH STRONGLY.

3. WE OBVIOUSLY HAVE NO WISH TO PLAY INTERMEDIARY ROLE ON QUESTIONS OF USG-MOROCCAN MILITARY COOPERATION. VICE CONSUL COULD NOT GRACEFULLY REFUSE MEETING WITH COLONEL, AND AVOIDED MAKING COMMITMENTS OR RAISING SECRET

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PAGE 03 LUBUMB 00255 080929Z

ANY HOPES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ZAMISH IS COORDINATING AGENCY FOR MATTERS SUCH AS THIS, AND ARE PASSING ALONG COLONEL LOUBARIS' COMMENTS ON BASIS FRONT OFFICE AND ZAMISH MAY FIND THEM OF INTEREST. WE ASSUME EMBASSY WILL DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT IT APPROPRIATE TO NOTIFY OR QUERY WASHINGTON ON THIS MATTER.

4. VICE CONSUL MEETING WITH ZAIRIAN ARCHBISHOP SENG-SENG RAISED SECOND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEM. ARCHBISHOP USED MEETING AS OCCASION TO PURGE HIMSELF BY RELATING GRUESOME DETAILS OF MASSACRES OF HIS PARISHONERS IN WESTERN SHABA, AND TO CRITICIZE STRONGLY ATTITUDE OF GOZ WHICH HE FEELS ENCOURAGES FAZ ATROCITIES (REFTEL, PARA 3B5 COMMENT). ARCHBISHOP SAID HIS POSITION AS PROTECTOR OF ZAIRIANS ON BOTH SIDES OF FRONT PREVENTS HIM FROM SPEAKING OUT STRONGLY ON MASSACRES, AND IN ANY CASE CHURCH MUST BE ABOVE POLITICS, HE CLAIMED. ALSO, ARCHBISHOP SAID HE IS A KIBEMBA, FROM SHABA REGION, AND ALREADY VULNERABLE

TO GOZ SUSPICIONS AS AN INVADER SYMPATHIZER. ARCH-BISHOP MADE STRONG APPEAL THAT USG USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH GOZ TO PREVENT FURTHER MASSACRES. THOUGH ONE COULD PERHAPS CRITICIZE ARCHBISHOP FOR LACK OF MORAL COURAGE, IT WOULD BE NAIVE NOT TO RECOGNIZE HIS PREDICAMENT AND CONSEQUENCES TO HIM IF HE DOES SPEAK OUT. EMBASSY IN MUCH BETTER POSITION THAN CONSULATE TO JUDGE WHETHER DEMARCHE ON SUBJECT OF TREATMENT OF CIVILIANS WOULD BE RECEIVED IN SPIRIT GIVEN, OR IF IT WOULD BE REJECTED ANGRILY AS INTERVENTION IN ZAIRIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND NONE OF OUR BUSINESS. FROM OUR ADMITTEDLY DISTANT VANTAGE POINT, IT WOULD SEEM THAT FRENCH MIGHT HAVE MORE LEVERAGE ON A DEMARCHE OF THIS TYPE, IN VIEW OF THEIR ACTIVE MILITARY ROLE IN SHABA WAR. FEELING OF ARCHBISHOP AND OTHERS IS THAT KILLINGS OF CIVILIANS NOT OVER, AND THAT SOME SORT OF EXTERNAL PRESSURE HAS BEST
SECRET

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PAGE 04 LUBUMB 00255 080929Z

CHANCE OF PREVENTING FURTHER MASSACRES. BORG

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, INTERVENTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LUBUMB00255
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770161-1176
Format: TEL
From: LUBUMBASHI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770590/aaaadaab.tel
Line Count: 140
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 LUBUMBASHI 252
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2632709
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS FROM BADER VISIT TO KOLWEZI
TAGS: PFOR, MILI, SHUM, CG, MO, US, (LOUBARIS)
To: n/a
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e87b179a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009